

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBBIE AND BOBBIE.

BY MRS A. M. DIAZ.

A SMALL boy named Robbie had a small cousin named Bobbie, and one afternoon Bobbie went to visit Robbie, and Robbie's mother said they might play out doors.

After running far along the road, gathering dandelions by the wayside, they saw near a stone wall four nice little heaps of earth, smoothed and patted. They wished to know what was inside, and got sticks to dig with ; but no sooner had they begun to dig than they heard a shout :

"Hallo, there ! Hallo !"

They turned and saw a man coming from a house some way back from the road, shaking his fist at them.

"Off with you ! Off, I say ! Something planted !"

This man's wife had planted there some seeds of the California Galloping Cucumber, hoping that the vines might come up and cover the wall.

The small cousins were afraid of the man, and they dropped their sticks and ran, and ran, and ran, and presently they came to some boys a size larger than themselves, sitting on a bank, whittling out chip boats. At the same moment a boy two sizes larger than these boys, passed by and said as he passed—

"Why don't you all go and get some molasses sugar?"

"Where ! Where ! Where !" they shouted after him.

"Don't you know that Mr. Pope has set an empty molasses hogshead out doors ?"

"No ! No ! No ! No !" they cried, springing up.

"Run quick !" cried the boy two sizes larger. "You'll get some."

They all ran to Mr. Pope's store, the two small cousins coming last, and got chips to scrape with, and then took turns creeping into the hogshead, two at a time, to scrape off the molasses sugar. Robbie and Bobbie went in together. Every two boys stayed in while the others counted forty, aloud.

Before the sugar was wholly scraped off, Mr. Pope's man drove up with a horse and cart to take the hogshead away to a man who was going to place it at a corner of his house for catching rain-water.

As Mr. Pope's man drove away with the hogshead, an old peddler passed by on his way to the next town, dragging a hand-cart in which were tin ware, wooden ware, small brooms and essences. A bad boy named Joe followed the peddler, laughing and making fun of him, and then the other boys did the same. The poor old peddler looked at them in a sorrowful way, but said not a word. Seeing this, one of them cried out to the rest :

"I say, let's help him ! let's give him a push !"

"All right !" said the others ; and then three or four pushed the cart, while three or four more went in front and helped pull. Joe was one of the pushers. As Robbie and Bobbie could not get their hands upon the cart, they pushed the pushers ; and presently they saw that while Joe made believe push, he leaned upon the cart and lifted his feet off the ground, and they called out :

"Joe is only making believe push ! he keeps getting a ride !"

Then the other boys cried, "Shame ! Shame !" and hustled Joe off the cart, and he ran away, and as he ran they shouted, "Shirker ! Shirker !" then turned and kept on with the peddler.

Presently Joe came up behind and threw Robbie and Bobbie down in the sand, and ran away again. They cried, and the other boys stopped, and the old peddler stopped ; and the old peddler looked a long time in his cart, and at last he took out from a paste-board box two very small glass vials of essence of peppermint, and said it would be good to put on their handkerchiefs, and wrapped a good deal of grass around the vials, and gave one to Robbie and one to Bobbie. The small cousins smiled, and forgot to say thank you, and put the vials in the breast-pockets of their frocks, then turned to go home, for they were very far away.

Now when they came in sight of the stone wall near which they began to dig up the Galloping California Cucumber vine seed the man's wife had planted, they saw close up to that stone wall a hogshead.

When Mr. Pope's man was taking it to the man who was to use it for a rain-water hogshead, the cart

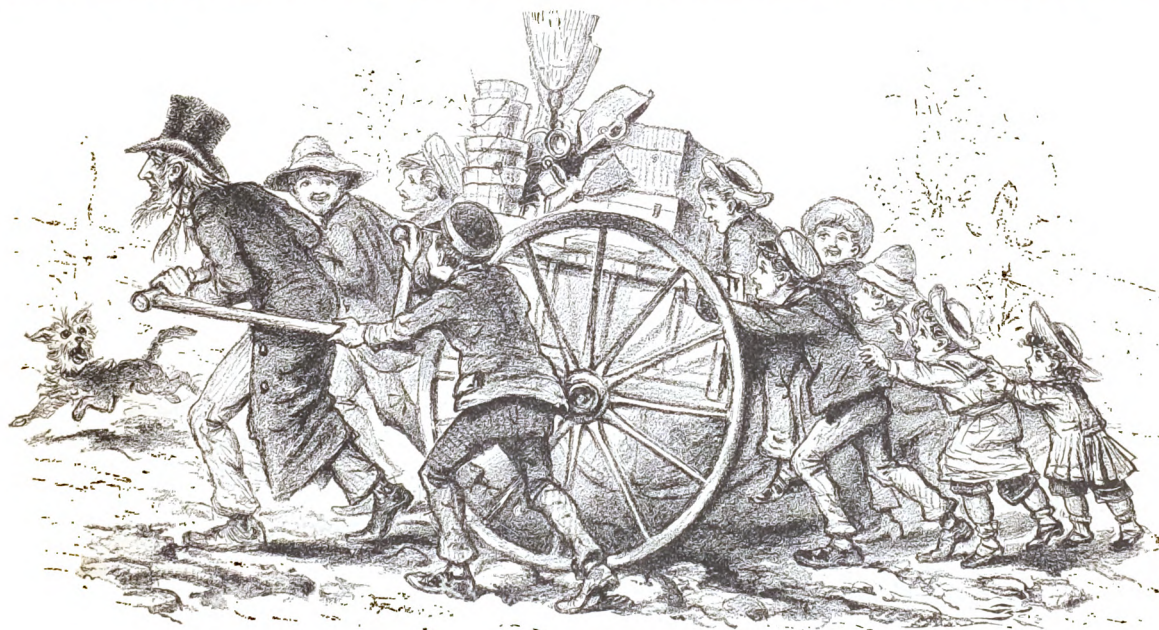
broke down, and Mr. Pope's man rolled the hogshead against the stone wall and left it there.

Just as the small cousins came in sight of this molasses hogshead, they saw the man who shook his fist at them when they began to dig up the seeds of the California Galloping Cucumber vine. He was coming from his house very fast, holding something which looked like a big stick.

Now this man was the very man who had bought Mr. Pope's molasses hogshead to catch rain-water in, and the thing which looked like a big stick was a piece of lead pipe, which he was going to fasten to

his rain-water spout, and he stepped quick because it was beginning to rain. This is the most interesting part of the whole story as will be seen presently,

The small cousins were afraid of the man, and ran and hid in the molasses hogshead and picked off what sugar had been left on; and while they did this the rain began to pour and to make a loud noise upon the hogshead. They crept in to the far end, and at last, when they had been waiting long, they leaned their heads against each other, and whoever had looked in there a few minutes after would have seen two small, damp, sugary boys fast asleep.



PUSHING THE PUSHERS.

The part that is going to be told now is the most interesting part of the most interesting part of the whole story.

When the man who had bought Mr. Pope's molasses hogshead to catch rain-water in had made ready his water-spout, and the rain had ceased, he went to roll his hogshead home, and being in a hurry he gave it a kick which sent it rolling over. Strange sounds came from the inside, and as it stopped there crept out from it the poor little hiders, scared half out of their wits, and more scared than ever when they saw the man who had made them stop digging up the seeds of the Galloping California Cucumber vine.

"How came you in there?" said the man, talking

very fast. "Don't cry! Any bones broken? Can you jump? Can you clap your hands? Try now!"

He set them jumping and clapping, and finding no bones broken told them to go home as fast as they could go.

They went home as fast as they could go; but it must be mentioned here that, just as they were starting, they felt a sort of wet feeling near their breast pockets. This wet feeling was caused by the breaking of the essence of peppermint vials, and the essence of peppermint soaking through.

Our small travellers soon reached home, but, knowing how damp and sugary their clothes were, they felt ashamed to go in, and waited out in the shed. Robbie's mother had just asked his father to

go and find them, for it was then after supper. He went out, and in passing through the shed smelled a strong smell of peppermint, and turning to find where it came from, spied the boys quite near him, crouching behind some barrels.

Without saying anything to them he went in and asked his wife if she had a large baking-pan.

"How large?" she asked.

"Large enough for baking two Gingerbread Boys," he answered.

"How large are your Gingerbread Boys?"

"I'll show you," he said, and went out, and soon

came back leading the small cousins. "Here are my Gingerbread Boys!" said he. "They are rather soft. They will need a hot oven."

"Peppermint Boys, I should think!" cried his wife, sniffing; and by this time everybody in the room was sniffing, and laughing, and asking questions. The small cousins drew from their breast pockets the upper parts of the peppermint vials, with the corks still in them.

While they ate their supper they told their story; but Robbie's mother would not let them lean against her table-cloth.

FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS; AND HOW THEY GREW.

BY MARGARET SIDNEY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EDUCATION AHEAD.

AFTER that they couldn't thank Jasper enough! They tried to, lovingly, and an elaborate letter of thanks, headed by Mrs. Pepper, was drawn up and sent with a box of the results of Polly's diligent study of Jasper's book. Polly stripped off recklessly her choicest buds and blossoms from the gay little stand of flowers in the corner, that had already begun to blossom, and tucked them into every little nook in the box that could possibly hold a posy. But as for thanking him enough!

"We can't do it, mammy," said Polly, looking around on all the happy faces, and then up at Cherry, who was singing in the window, and who immediately swelled up his little throat and poured out such a merry burst of song that she had to wait for him to finish. "No, not if we tried a thousand years!"

"I'm a-goin'," said Joel, who was busy as a bee with his new tools that the tree had shaken down for him, "to make Jappy the splendorous box *you* ever see, Polly! I guess that'll thank him!"

"Do," cried Polly; "he'd be so pleased, Joey."

"And I," said Phronsie, over in the corner with her children, "I'm goin' to see my poor sick man sometime, Polly, I *am*!"

"Oh, mercy!" cried Polly, whirling around, and looking at her mother in dismay. "She'll be goin' tomorrow! Oh, no, Phronsie, you can't; he lives miles and miles away — oh, ever so far!"

"Does he live as far as the moon?" asked little Phronsie, carefully laying Seraphina down, and looking up at Polly, anxiously.

"Oh, I don't know," said Polly, giving Cherry a piece of bread, and laughing to see how cunning he looked. "Oh, no, of course not, but it's an *awful* long ways, Phronsie."

"I don't care," said Phronsie, determinedly, giving the new doll a loving little pat, "I'm goin' sometime, Polly, to thank my poor sick man, yes, I *am*!"

"You'll see him next summer, Phronsie," sang Polly skipping around the kitchen, "and Jappy's sister Marian, the lovely lady, and all the boys. Won't that be nice?" and Polly stopped to pat the yellow head bending in motherly attentions over her array of dolls.

"Ye-es," said Phronsie, slowly; "the whole of 'em, Polly?"

"Yes, indeed!" said Polly, gaily; "the whole of 'em, Phronsie!"

"Hooray!" shouted the two boys, while Phronsie only gave a long sigh, and clasped her hands.

"Better not be lookin' for summer," said Mrs. Pepper, "until you do your duty by the winter; *then* you